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Source: *The Journal of Race Development*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Jan., 1919), pp. 298-313

Published by:

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29738299>

Accessed: 01-08-2014 01:41 UTC

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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE STATE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF INDIA

By W. I. Chamberlain, Ph.D.

Education in India as conducted by the state is brought under review periodically through elaborate and detailed official reports issued annually in the presidencies or provinces by the directors of public instruction in those areas and quinquennially for the whole of India by the Director General of public instruction.

State education in India may be said to have commenced formally in 1854. During the Vice-royalty of Lord Curzon, which terminated somewhat unexpectedly in 1906, owing to a serious difference of policy which developed between him and Lord Kitchener, a careful study of the educational system and its results during the fifty years that had passed was made by a universities commission and by other educational agencies. As a result, the Indian Universities Act of 1904 was passed and the government issued a resolution in the same year upon Indian educational policy. This so-called resolution was published as a green book of fifty-one pages and contains a brief history of the preceding fifty years of state education and a statement of the policy determined upon for the future. Ten years later, February, 1913, the government issued another resolution on Indian educational policy which was published in 1914 in a green book of forty-seven pages. Since this statement of educational policy was made immediately before the commencement of the war, in which India has been involved from the beginning and government has naturally been preoccupied with national affairs since then, no further significant developments in educational policy have taken place.

These two resolutions of 1904 and 1913 form the basis for the following statement as to recent developments in the state educational system of India:

I

The resolution of 1904 commences with a brief historical résumé of the preceding fifty years. Education in India, in the modern sense of the word, may be said to date from the year 1854 when the Court of Directors of the East India Company in a memorable dispatch definitely accepted the systematic promotion of general education as one of the duties of the state and emphatically declared that the type of education which they desired to see extended in India was that which had for its object the diffusion of the arts and sciences, philosophy and literature of Europe, in short of European knowledge.

The acceptance of this duty was an important departure in policy. The advent of British rule found in India systems of education of great antiquity existing among both Hindus and Muhammadans, in each case closely bound up with their religious institutions. The first instinct of British rulers was to leave the traditional modes of instruction undisturbed and to continue the support which they had been accustomed to receive from Indian rulers, but the presence of the British in India brought about profound changes in the social and administrative conditions of the country and these in their turn reacted on the educational policy of government. The impulse toward reform came from two sources—the need for public servants with a knowledge of the English language, and the influence in favor both of English and of vernacular education which was answered by the missionaries in the early days of the nineteenth century. The well known minute written in 1835 by Lord Macaulay (at that time legal member of council and chairman of the committee of public instruction) marks the point at which official recognition was given to the necessity of public support for western education.

In their dispatch of 1854, the Court of Directors announced their decision that the government should actively assist in the more extended and systematic promotion of general education in India. They regarded it as a sacred duty to confer upon the natives of India those vast moral and ma-

terial blessings which flow from the general diffusion of useful knowledge.

The policy laid down in 1854 was reaffirmed in 1859 when the administration was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown. The universities of Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Punjab, and Allahabad were incorporated in the years from 1857 and 1887. The growth of schools and colleges proceeded most rapidly in the latter part of this period. An education commission in 1882-83 furnished a valuable report upon the state of education as then existing, making a careful inquiry into the measures which had been taken in pursuance of the dispatch of 1854 and submitted further detailed proposals for the carrying out of this dispatch. They advised increased reliance upon and systematic encouragement of private effort, and a considerable devolution of the management of government schools upon municipalities and district boards was effected.

As a result of these continuous efforts, there were in existence after fifty years, in 1904, a system of public instruction, the influence of which extended in varying degrees to every part of India and which was considered, upon the whole, powerful for good.

After dealing with subjects of less general interest, as education and government service and government control and private enterprises, the resolution enters upon a careful discussion of the following departments or phases of education:

PRIMARY EDUCATION

On a general view of the question, the government accepts the conclusion that primary education has hitherto received insufficient attention and an inadequate share of the public funds. They consider that it possesses a strong claim upon the sympathy both of the supreme government and of the local governments, and should be made a leading charge upon provincial revenues; and that in those provinces where it is in a backward condition, its encouragement should be a primary obligation.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

The growth of secondary instruction is one of the marked features in the history of education in India. The number of such schools rose during the last two decades of the previous century from 4000 to 5500 and the pupils from 214,000 to 558,000. The purely literary courses qualifying both for the university and for government employ attracted a great majority of pupils, and more practical subjects were but little in request. In the opinion of government, it appears essential to promote diversified types of secondary education corresponding with the varying needs of practical life.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

In founding the universities, the government of India of that day took as their model the type of institution then believed to be best suited to the educational conditions of India; namely, the examining university of London. Since then it is recognized that the best educational thought of Europe has shown an increasing tendency to realize the inevitable shortcomings of a purely examining university, and the London University itself has taken steps to enlarge the scope of its operations by assuming tuitional functions. The model, in fact, has parted with its most characteristic features and has set an example of expansion which did not fail to react upon the corresponding institutions in India. The Indian experience of fifty years proved that a system which provides merely for examining students in those subjects to which their aptitudes direct them, and does not at the same time compel them to study those subjects systematically under first-rate instruction, tends inevitably to accentuate certain characteristic defects of the Indian intellect: the development of the memory out of all proportion to the other faculties of the mind, the incapacity to observe and appreciate facts, and the taste for metaphysical and technical distinctions. Holding it to be the duty of a government which has made itself responsible for education in India to do everything in its power to correct

these shortcomings, the government came to the conclusion that certain reforms in the constitution and management of the universities were necessary and proceeded to make provision for them in the Indian Universities Act of 1904.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Technical education in India had hitherto been mainly directed to the higher forms of instruction required to train men for government service as engineers, mechanics, electricians, revenue officers, teachers in schools, etc. The call for fresh effort was recognized to be towards the development of Indian industries, and especially of those in which native capital can be invested. Technical instruction directed to this object must rest upon the basis of a preliminary general education of a simple and practical kind, which should be clearly distinguished from the special teaching that is based upon it, and should as a rule be imparted in schools of the ordinary type. As a step toward providing men equipped to take a leading part in the improvement of Indian industries, the government determined to give assistance in the form of scholarships to selected students to enable them to pursue courses of technical education under supervision in Europe and America. The experience which had been gained in Japan of the results of sending young men abroad for study justified the belief that the system will also be beneficial to Indian trade.

TRAINING SCHOOLS

If the teaching in secondary schools is to be raised to a higher level; if the pupils are to be cured of their tendency to rely upon learning notes and text books by heart; if, in a word, European knowledge is to be diffused by the methods proper to it, then it is most necessary that the teachers should themselves be trained in the art of teaching. The general principles upon which the government determined to see the training institutions developed were these. An adequate staff of men of ability and experience in the work of higher training. The period of training for stu-

dents to be at least two years, except in the case of graduates, for whom one year's training may suffice. The training in the theory of teaching should be closely associated with its practice and for this purpose good practising schools should be attached to each training college and the practice school should be well equipped with well trained teachers.

HOSTELS

Great importance was attached by government to the provision of hostels or boarding houses, under proper supervision, in connection with colleges and secondary schools. These institutions protect the students who live in them from the moral dangers of life in large towns; they provide common interests and create a spirit of healthy companionship. Missionary bodies have joined with alacrity in the extension of this movement. The credit for the first hostel established in India is claimed by the Madras Christian College, which still continues to add others.

ETHICS IN EDUCATION

The remark has often been made that the extension in India of an education modelled upon European principles, and, so far as government institutions are concerned, purely secular in its character, has stimulated tendencies unfavorable to discipline, and has encouraged the growth of a spirit of irreverence in the rising generation. It is the settled policy of government to abstain from interfering with the religious instruction given in the aided schools. In government institutions the instruction is, and must continue to be, exclusively secular. In such cases the remedy for the evil tendencies is to be sought, not so much in any formal methods of teaching conduct by means of moral text books, as in the influence of carefully selected and trained teachers, the maintenance of a high standard of discipline, the institution of well managed hostels, and the proper selection of text books, such as biographies, which teach by example.

LANGUAGE IN SCHOOLS

Except in certain of the larger towns, English has no place, and should have no place, in the scheme of primary education. It has never been part of the policy of government to substitute the English language for the vernacular dialects of the country. It is true that the commercial value which a knowledge of English commands, and the fact that the final examinations of the high schools are conducted in English, cause the secondary schools to be subjected to a certain pressure to introduce, prematurely, both the teaching of English as a language and its use as the medium of instruction. This tendency, however, requires to be corrected in the interests of sound education. The line of division between the use of the vernacular and of English as a medium of instruction should, broadly speaking, be drawn at a minimum age of thirteen. If the educated classes neglect the cultivation of their own languages, no progress would be possible in giving effect to the principle, affirmed in the dispatch of 1854, that European knowledge should gradually be brought, by means of the Indian vernaculars, within the reach of all classes of people.

CONCLUSION

In reviewing the progress of education after these fifty years, the government concludes its important minute as follows:

It rests with the people themselves to make a wise use of the opportunities that are offered to them to realize that education, in the true sense, means something more than an acquisition of so much positive knowledge, something higher than the mere passing of examinations, that it aims at the progressive and orderly development of all the faculties of the mind, that it should form character and teach right conduct—that it is, in fact, a preparation for the business of life. If this essential truth is overlooked or imperfectly appreciated, the labors of the Government of India to elevate the standard of education in this country and to inspire it with higher ideals will assuredly fail to produce substantial and enduring results. These labors have been undertaken in the hope that they will command the hearty support of the leaders of native thought and of the great body of workers

in the field of Indian education. On them the Governor General in council relies to carry on and complete a task which the government can do no more than begin.

II

The most recent pronouncement of the government of India in regard to its educational policy was made in February, 1913, being a resolution issued by the Governor General in council, and published in 1914. Practically a decade had passed since the issue of the resolution of 1904 upon the educational policy of the state. Furthermore, this resolution of 1913 followed almost immediately upon the state visit in 1912 to his great empire in Asia of the King of England for the purpose of proclaiming his accession as Emperor of India at the great Delhi Durbar of January, 1912. By reason of these facts and associations this resolution of the government of India has peculiar significance. It opens with the statement, made by the king-emperor in replying to the address of Calcutta University on January 6, 1912.

It is my wish that there may be spread over the land a network of schools and colleges, from which will go forth loyal and manly and useful citizens, able to hold their own in industries and agriculture, and all the vocations in life. And it is my wish too, that the homes of my Indian subjects may be brightened, and their labor sweetened by the spread of knowledge with all that follows in its train, a higher level of thought, of comfort, and of health. It is through education that my wish will be fulfilled, and the cause of education in India will ever be very close to my heart.

This is followed by a declaration of the resulting policy of the government of India, in which it is declared that it has been decided to assist local governments, by means of large grants from imperial revenues as funds become available, to extend comprehensive systems of education in the several provinces.

In the opening paragraphs of this resolution it is natural that this fitting opportunity should be taken to bring into review the progress of the last decade, more particularly in the direction of reforms resolved upon in 1904. Attention is called to the fact that of late years there has been real

progress in removing the defects of the educational systems in India, as recognized in the resolution of 1904. In the last decade the total expenditure from all sources on education had arisen from Rs. 40,000,000 to nearly double that amount. It is pointed out that this progress has been especially great since Lord Curzon's government introduced large measures of educational reform. The former crushing weight of examinations has been appreciably lightened; a commencement has been made in the reform of university and college organization; and the grants from public funds to private institutions have almost doubled in the past decade. The government maintains that it is not just to compare Indian systems, still for the most part in their infancy, with the matured systems of the modern western world, or to disregard influences of social organization and mentality. It asserts that the common charge that the higher education of India has been built up on a slender foundation of popular education is one that might have been levelled against every country of Europe at some period of its history. India is now passing through stages taken by other countries in their time.

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL INSTRUCTION

The question of religious and moral instruction has emerged with peculiar emphasis during this decade. This question was formerly discussed at an imperial conference, held in 1911. Grave differences of opinion emerged as to the possibility or advantage of introducing direct religious instruction into schools generally, and apprehensions of difficulty in the working of any definite system were put forward. Doubts were also expressed as to the efficacy of direct moral instruction when divorced from religious sanctions. In the matter of moral teaching, however, the difficulties are undoubtedly less than in the case of religious teaching. The government of India, while bound to maintain a position of complete neutrality in matters of religion, observe that the most thoughtful minds in India lament the tendency of existing systems of education to develop

the intellectual at the expense of the moral and religious faculties. For the present the government must be content to watch experiments and keep the matter prominently in view. Enlightened opinion and accumulated experience will, it is hoped, provide a practical solution to what is unquestionably the most important educational problem of the time.

PRIMARY EDUCATION: COMPULSORY AND FREE

The proposition that illiteracy must be broken down and that primary education had, in the present circumstances of India, a predominant claim upon the public funds, represent accepted policy no longer open to discussion. For financial and administrative reasons of decisive weight, the government of India has refused to recognize the principle of compulsory education; but it desires the widest possible extension of primary education on a voluntary basis. As regards free elementary education the time has not yet arrived when it is practicable to dispense wholly with fees without injustice to the many villages, which are waiting for the provision of schools.

The government laid down the following, among other principles, in regard to primary education:

1. There should be a large expansion of lower primary schools, teaching the three R's with drawing, knowledge of the village map, nature-study and physical exercises. Simultaneously upper primary schools should be established at suitable centers.

2. Expansion should be secured by means of board schools, except where this is financially impossible when aided schools, under recognized management, should be encouraged.

3. Teachers should be drawn from the class of boys whom they will teach; and should have undergone a year's training.

4. Schools should be housed in sanitary and commodious but inexpensive buildings.

PRIMARY EDUCATION: PROPOSED EXPANSION

It is the desire and hope of the government of India to see in the not distant future some 91,000 primary public schools added to the 100,000 which already exist for boys and to double the 4,125,000 pupils who now receive instruction in them. For purposes of present calculation a sum of Rs. 375 (\$125) per annum may be taken as a rough approximation of the probable average cost of maintenance of a Primary Board School. This figure provides for two teachers, for the purchase of books and stationery, and for other sundry expenses.

EDUCATION OF GIRLS

The government frankly acknowledges that the education of girls remains to be organized. In the resolution of 1904, it was remarked that, as a far greater proportional impulse is imparted to the educational and moral tone of the people by the education of women than by the education of men, liberal treatment had been accorded for girls in respect of scholarships and fees, with the result that the number of girls under instruction has arisen from 444,470 in 1901 to 865,000 in 1910. But the total number still remains insignificant in proportion to the female population. The immediate problem is one of social development. The existing customs and ideas opposed to the education of girls will require different handling in different parts of India, but the government commends the following principles for general consideration:

1. The education of girls should be practical with reference to the position which they will fill in social life.
2. It should not seek to imitate the education suitable for boys nor should it be dominated by examinations.
3. The service of women should be more freely enlisted for instruction and inspection.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

The importance of secondary, and in particular of high school education is far-reaching. Since secondary education of one grade or another is the basis of all professional or industrial training in India in the last decade, the number of secondary schools has increased from nearly 5500 to 6500, and the number of scholars from 622,000 to 900,000. The policy of government is to rely so far as possible on private enterprise in secondary education. To this policy the government adhere. It is dictated not by any belief in the inherent superiority of private over state management, but by the preference for an established system and, above all, by the necessity of concentrating the direct energies of the state and the bulk of its available resources upon the improvement and expansion of elementary education. The policy may be summarized as the encouragement of privately managed schools under suitable bodies, maintained in efficiency by government inspection, recognition and control, and by the aid of government funds.

Subject to the necessities of variation in deference to local conditions the policy of the government in regard to secondary English schools is:

1. To improve the few existing government schools by,
 - (a) Employing only graduates or trained teachers.
 - (b) Introducing a graded service for teachers.
 - (c) Providing proper hostel accommodation.
 - (d) Introducing a school course complete in itself with a sufficient staff to teach what may be called the modern side.
 - (e) Introducing manual training.
2. To increase largely the grants-in-aid, in order that aided institutions may keep pace with the improvements in government schools.
3. To multiply and improve training colleges.

TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

No branch of education at present evokes greater public interest than technical and industrial instruction. Con-

siderable progress has been made since 1904. Scholarships, tenable in Europe and America have been established. A well-endowed and equipped Indian institute of science has been established. The number of technical and industrial schools has arisen since 1904 from 88 to 218, and the number of pupils from 5,000 to 10,500.

The question has arisen as to how far educational instruction should develop on commercial lines, and it has been decided that, while educational instruction should in no case trade on commercial lines, in certain cases instruction in industrial schools may be supplemented by practical training in workshops where the application of new processes needs to be demonstrated.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

For a country where two-thirds of the population are dependent for their livelihood on the produce of the soil, it must be admitted that the provision for agricultural education in India is at present meager and in serious need of expansion and reorganization. The present scheme, originated under Lord Curzon's government, is only seven years old. In the year 1905 a comprehensive scheme was evolved, under which arrangements were made both for the practical development of agriculture by government assistance, and also for teaching and research in agriculture by subjects connected with it. A central institution has been established. The existing schools and colleges have been reconstituted and improved. Farms for experiments and demonstration have been started. The present scheme of agricultural education has three main features:

1. The provision of first class opportunities for the higher forms of teaching and research.
2. Collegiate education.
3. The improvement of secondary and primary education.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

By common consent the Universities Act of 1904 has had beneficial results, but the condition of university edu-

cation is still far from satisfactory, in regard to residential arrangements, control, the courses of study, and the system of examination. It is important to distinguish clearly on the one hand the Federal university in the strict sense, in which several colleges of approximately equal standing separated by no excessive distance or marked local individuality are grouped together as a university as in England, and on the other hand, the affiliating university of the Indian type, which in its inception was merely an examining body, and has not been able to insist upon an identity of standard in the various institutions conjoined to it. At present there are five Indian universities for 185 arts and professional colleges in British India. The day is probably far distant when India will be able to dispense with the affiliating university, but it is necessary to restrict the area over which the affiliating universities have control by securing in the first instance a separate university for each of the leading provinces in India, and secondly, to create new local teaching and residential universities within each of the provinces in harmony with the best modern opinion as to the right road to educational efficiency.

The government of India has decided, therefore, to found additional teaching and residential universities (at present six have been determined upon) in various centers of India. It may be possible hereafter to sanction the conversion into local teaching universities, with power to confer degrees upon their own students, of those colleges which have shown the capacity to attract students from a distance and have attained the requisite standard of efficiency. Only by experiment will it be found out what type or types of universities are best suited to the different parts of India.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS

Few reforms are more urgently needed than the extension and improvement of the training of teachers, for both primary and secondary schools. The object must steadily be kept in view that eventually under modern systems of edu-

cation no teacher should be allowed to teach without a certificate that he is qualified to do so. The government of India desire that provincial governments examine their schemes for training teachers of all grades and enlarge them so as to provide for the great expansion which may be expected especially in primary education.

ORIENTAL STUDIES

Great importance is attached to the cultivation and improvement of oriental studies. There is an increasing interest throughout India in her ancient civilization, and it is necessary to investigate that civilization with the help of the medium of western methods of research and in relation to modern ideas. The predominating opinion is that it would be difficult to create the appropriate atmosphere of oriental study in universities as at present constituted, and that, therefore, it is desirable to have in one institution scholars working on different branches of the kindred subjects which comprise *Orientalia*, and that for reasons of economy it is preferable to start with one institute well equipped and possessing a first class library. This central institute should not be isolated, and should be opened to students from all parts of India. The object of the institute, apart from research is to provide Indians highly trained in original work who will enable schools of Indian history and archaeology to be founded hereafter, develop museums, and build up research in universities and colleges in the different provinces.

CONCLUSION

The resolution which we have passed under review concludes with this paragraph of practical suggestions:

Such in broad outline are the present outlook and general policy for the near future of the government of India. The Governor General in council trusts that the growing section of the Indian public which is interested in education will join in establishing, under the guidance and with the help of Government, those quickening systems of education on which the best minds

in India are now converging and on which the prospects of the rising generation depend. He appeals with confidence to wealthy citizens throughout India to give of their abundance to the cause of education; in the foundation of scholarships; the building of hostels, schools, colleges, laboratories, gymnasia, swimming baths; the provision of playgrounds and other structural improvements; in furthering the cause of modern scientific studies and specially of technical education; in gifts of prizes and equipment; the endowment of chairs and fellowships; and the provision for research of every kind. There is a wide field and a noble opportunity for the exercise on modern lines of that charity and benevolence for which India has been renowned from ancient times.